



SC Department of Employment and Workforce

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Former DEW Executive Director Receives Order of the Palmetto

Columbia, SC... Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. John Finan, and former executive director of the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW), received the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian honor, on August 30 for his dedication and service to the people of South Carolina. South Carolina Governor Nikki R. Haley presented Finan with the award.

As the DEW's executive director, Finan was responsible for the overall administration and management of the Department of Employment and Workforce. During his tenure he worked diligently with agency employees and collaborated with other state agencies to foster an environment of transparency, integrate programs and help get the state's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund on the path to solvency. Under his leadership, the DEW took several steps to improve operational efficiencies and reduce costs by successfully implementing a debit card program to pay unemployment benefit payments.

Finan's professional background has been divided between the military, business, finance and academic worlds. Prior to joining the DEW, the retired Brigadier General served the Air Force for 30 years, handling jobs such as Budget Director for the United States Air Force Academy, executive assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice commander of the Army and Air Force world-wide retail organization (employing over 70,000 people) and a Chief Financial Officer for the Air Force.

Finan has also defended budget requests before Congress, testified before Congressional committees, and worked with congressional staffers and members in guiding military legislation.

Upon retirement from the military in 1993, he served as Director of Management, Budget and Planning for the Montgomery County, MD, school district.

From 1995 to 2001, he served as Vice President for Business and Finance at the University of South Carolina, a position he also held at Rowan University from 2001 to 2005. In both positions, Finan was responsible for budgets of well over \$500 million, and he distinguished

himself by maximizing investments, initiating policies to contain rising costs, and adopting new technology to help the universities operate in a more cost-efficient manner.

Finan holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Connecticut, an MBA from Michigan State University, and has completed courses in advanced management from Columbia University and the School for Senior Managers in Government at Harvard University's JFK School of Government.

“It has been a great honor and privilege for me to be able to serve this state over the past year. It has been a very difficult, but rewarding, job and I only hope I [left] the agency in better shape and moving forward in a positive direction for both businesses and the unemployed in this state. My senior staff and all DEW employees should be commended for dealing with massive change in a very positive and constructive manner and shouldering the heaviest workload seen in the annals of this agency. I want to publicly thank them for their hard work and dedication,” said Finan.

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